



STATE OF MARYLAND

DMMH

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October 15, 2008

Public Health & Emergency Preparedness Bulletin: # 2008:41 **Reporting for the week ending 10/11/08 (MMWR Week #41)**

CURRENT HOMELAND SECURITY THREAT LEVELS

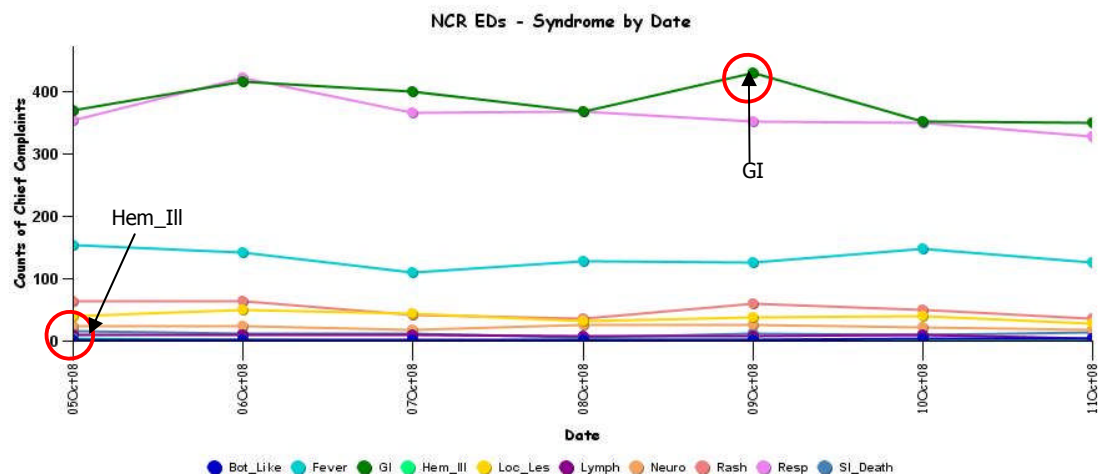
National: Yellow (ELEVATED) *The threat level in the airline sector is Orange (HIGH)
Maryland: Yellow (ELEVATED)

SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE REPORTS

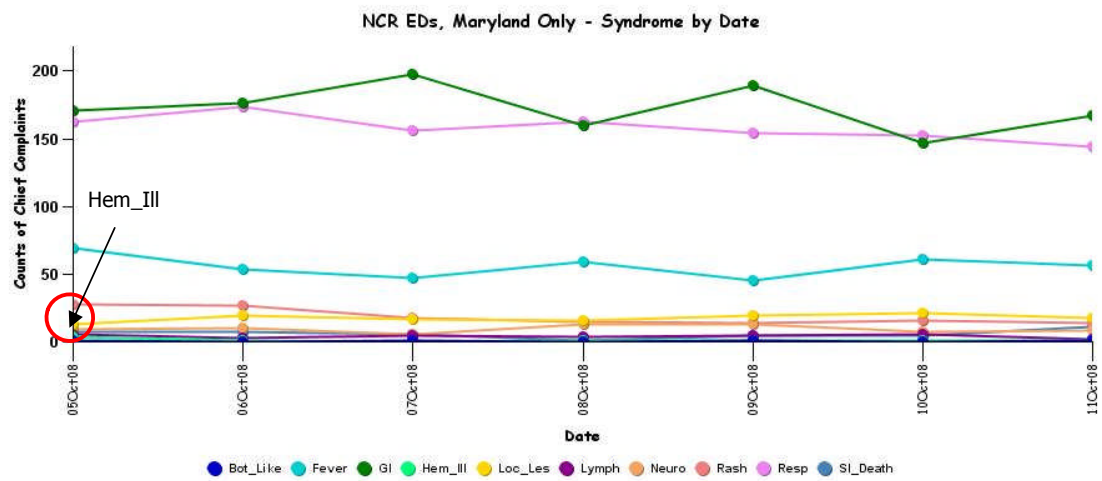
ESSENCE (Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics):

Graphical representation is provided for all syndromes, excluding the "Other" category, all age groups, and red alerts only. Note: ESSENCE – ANCR Spring 2006 (v 1.3) now uses syndrome categories consistent with CDC definitions.

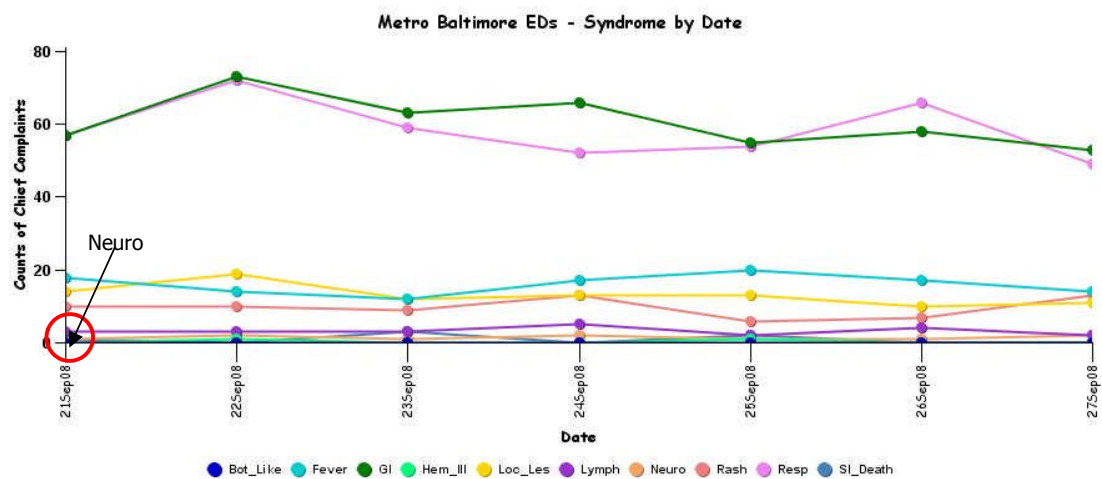
Overall, no suspicious patterns of illness were identified. Track backs to the health care facilities yielded no suspicious patterns of illness.



* Includes EDs in all jurisdictions in the NCR (MD, VA, DC) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system



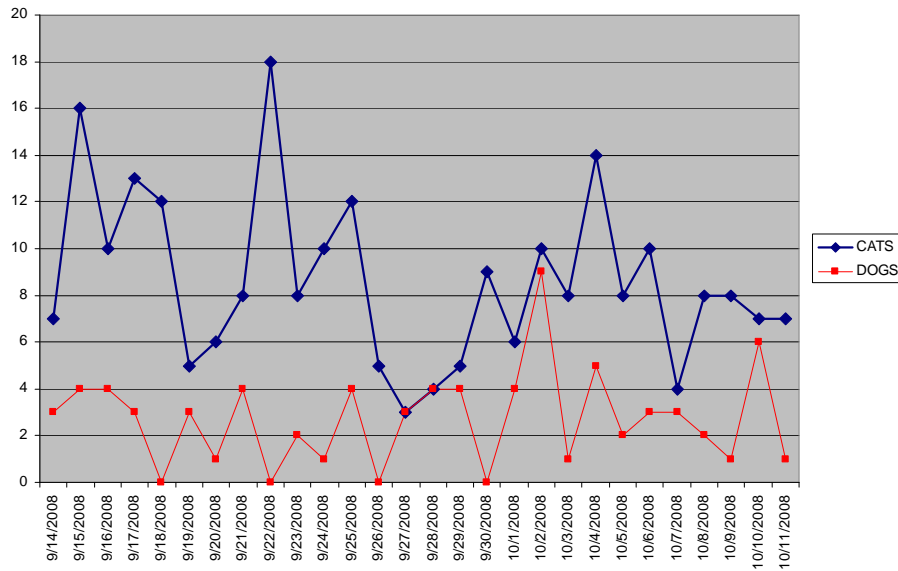
* Includes only Maryland EDs in the NCR (Prince George's and Montgomery Counties) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system



* Includes EDs in the Metro Baltimore region (Baltimore City and Baltimore County) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system.

BALTIMORE CITY SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE PROJECT: No suspicious patterns in the medic calls, ED Syndromic Surveillance and the animal carcass surveillance. Graphical representation is provided for animal carcass surveillance 311 data.

Dead Animal Pick-Up Calls to 311

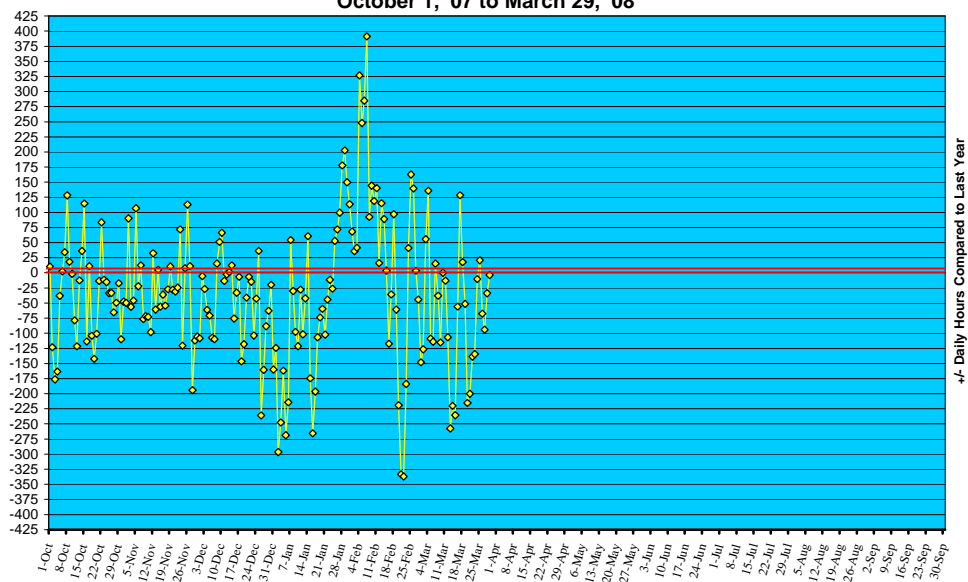


REVIEW OF EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT UTILIZATION

YELLOW ALERT TIMES (ED DIVERSION): The reporting period begins 10/01/06.

*Note: No new data available at this time.

Statewide Yellow Alert Comparison
Daily Historical Deviations
October 1, '07 to March 29, '08



REVIEW OF MORTALITY REPORTS

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner: OCME reports no suspicious deaths related to BT for the week.

MARYLAND TOXIDROMIC SURVEILLANCE

Poison Control Surveillance Monthly Update: Investigations of the outliers and alerts observed by the Maryland Poison Center and National Capital Poison Center in August 2008 did not identify any cases of possible terrorism events.

REVIEW OF MARYLAND DISEASE SURVEILLANCE FINDINGS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE CASE REPORTS (confirmed, probable and suspect):

Meningitis:	<u>Aseptic</u>	<u>Meningococcal</u>
New cases (Oct 5 - 11, 2008):	27	1
Prior week (Sept 28 – Oct 4, 2008):	19	1
Week#41, 2007 (Oct 7 - 13, 2007):	15	0

OUTBREAKS: 2 outbreaks were reported to DHMH during MMWR Week 41 (Oct. 5- Oct. 11, 2008):

1 Gastroenteritis outbreak

1 outbreak of GASTROENTERITIS associated with a Nursing Home

1 Rash illness outbreak

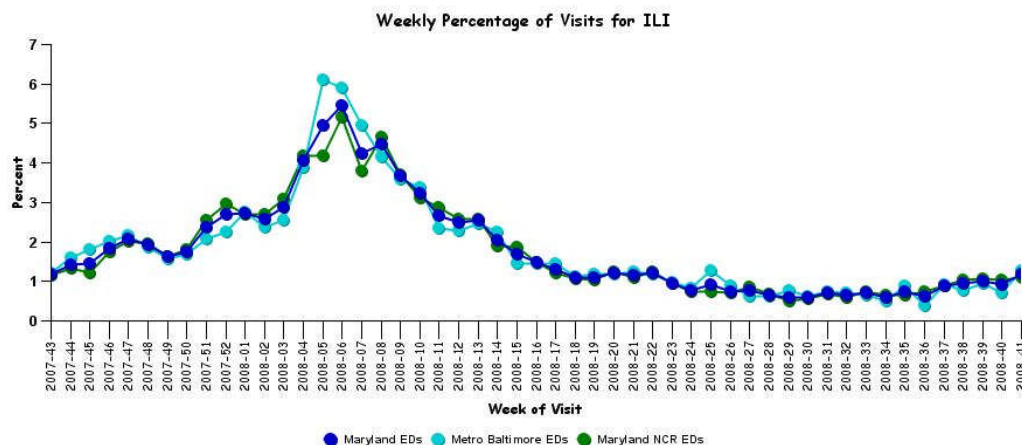
1 outbreak of SCABIES associated with an Assisted Living Facility

MARYLAND SEASONAL FLU STATUS:

Seasonal Influenza reporting occurs October through May. There were no lab-confirmed cases of influenza reported to DHMH during Week 40 (Last week). The activity level in Maryland for Week 40 is No Activity.

SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE FOR INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS:

Graph shows the percentage of total weekly Emergency Department patient chief complaints that have one or more ICD9 codes representing provider diagnoses of influenza-like illness. This graph does not represent confirmed influenza.



PANDEMIC INFLUENZA UPDATE / AVIAN INFLUENZA-RELATED REPORTS

WHO Pandemic Influenza Phase: Phase 3/4: No or very little human-to-human transmission/Small clusters with limited human-to-human transmission, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans

US Pandemic Influenza Stage: Stage 0/1: New domestic animal outbreak in at-risk country/Suspected human outbreak overseas

*More information regarding WHO Pandemic Influenza Phase and US Pandemic Influenza Stage can be found at: <http://bioterrorism.dhmm.state.md.us/flu.htm>

WHO update: As of September 10, 2008, the WHO-confirmed global total of human cases of H5N1 avian influenza virus infection stands at 387, of which 245 have been fatal. Thus, the case fatality rate for human H5N1 is about 63%.

AVIAN INFLUENZA, HPAI H5N1 CONFIRMED (Germany): 10 Oct 2008. German authorities said on Friday 10 Oct that the lethal strain of bird flu has been confirmed on a farm in the east of the country. Germany's eastern state government of Saxony said the H5N1 bird flu strain had been confirmed in a duck at a poultry farm near Dresden. "Tests have confirmed that this involves the highly contagious version of the H5N1 virus epidemic," said Ralph Schreiber, spokesman for Saxony's social welfare ministry. The flu strain was detected during a routine examination at the farm, which held some 1400 birds. All birds at the farm have been slaughtered as a precaution, the state said. A 3-km radius quarantine zone has been established around the farm and a 10-km radius observation zone also was established in which all poultry must be locked up in buildings. Bird flu was last detected in farm birds in Germany in December 2007. A spokeswoman for Germany's federal Agriculture Ministry stressed that state authorities were responsible for combating bird flu. Officials were currently assessing the risk level. Relevant international organizations including the European Union plus neighboring countries had been informed of the case, she said.

AVIAN INFLUENZA (Viet Nam): 7 Oct 2008. Bird flu has stricken Viet Nam's central Nghe An province, killing about 300 ducks, said an official with the Department of Animal Health under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on Tuesday 7 Oct. The ducks raised by a household in the province started to die recently. The specimens collected from the dead ducks have been tested positive to bird flu virus strain H5N1, said the unnamed official. Local health department have slaughtered all the fowls in the affected spot and disinfected this area to guard against any further outbreaks of bird flu. Now, bird flu is hitting 2 Vietnamese provinces, including Ca Mau and Nghe An.

AVIAN INFLUENZA, SUSPECTED (South Korea): 4 Oct 2008. A new suspected case of bird flu was found at a duck farm in South Korea, the South Korean Agriculture Ministry said Saturday 4 Oct. Routine tests showed that some ducks at a farm in Yesan, 134 km south of Seoul, have been infected with avian influenza, the ministry said in a statement. The ministry said detailed tests were underway to confirm whether the suspected outbreak of bird flu is a highly virulent strain of avian influenza. All ducks at the farm were culled to avoid further spreading of the fatal disease, the ministry said.

NATIONAL DISEASE REPORTS:

E. COLI O157, COOKED BEEF (California): 7 Oct 2008. Health officials who suspected tainted tri-tip sickened at least 27 people in September 2008 now have some evidence. E. coli bacteria found on frozen leftover meat perfectly matches the bacteria found in stool samples taken from several people who became ill, said Dr Mark Lundberg, Butte County health officer. He said it's still unclear how the meat became contaminated. Hundreds of people attended the barbecue on 6 Sep, which raised money for the volunteer fire department in Forest Ranch. Afterward, a number of people became sick with severe stomach cramps and diarrhea. 4 people got so ill they had to be hospitalized. Health officials learned that the sickness was caused by a dangerous strain called E. coli O157:H7. Interviews with people who attended the event led officials to conclude the tri-tip was contaminated and made people sick. However, they couldn't be sure until the link was proven by test results from the state lab, Lundberg said on Monday 6 Oct. It's still not known how the cooked meat became contaminated, he said, and it may never be known. Food preparers at the event had the right equipment and, according to interviews, seemed to do everything right, he said, but obviously something went wrong. When large amounts of food are prepared there is the potential for contamination, he said. It's possible the cooked meat came into contact with juices from the raw meat. Or possibly, he said, someone who helped prepare the food was sick and didn't wash his or her hands properly. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents)

*Non-suspect case

BOTULISM, SALTED FISH, RECALL (New York, New Jersey): 6 Oct 2008. New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker today alerted consumers not to eat "Frozen Salted Croaker" distributed by YS Trading Corp of Long Island City, New York because the product was uneviscerated. The "Frozen Salted Croaker" was sold in Hicksville, NY, Flushing, NY, and in New Jersey in uncoded, unlabeled plastic bags. Uneviscerated fish is prohibited under NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets' regulations because Clostridium botulinum spores are more likely to be concentrated in the viscera than any other portion of the fish. Uneviscerated fish has been linked to outbreaks of botulism poisoning. The "Frozen Salted Croaker" was found by a NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets food inspector

during a routine inspection. Subsequent analysis by NY State Food Laboratory personnel confirmed the product to be unviscerated. No illnesses have been reported to date in connection with the product. Consumers who have this product are advised not to eat it. (Botulism is listed in Category A on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

SALMONELLOSIS, FROZEN CHICKEN DISHES, ALERT (USA): 5 Oct 2008. The USA government is urging consumers to thoroughly cook frozen chicken dinners after 32 people in 12 states were sickened with salmonellosis. The health warning by the USA Department of Agriculture (USDA) cited frozen dishes in which the chicken is raw, but breaded or pre-browned, giving the appearance of being cooked. They include "chicken cordon bleu," "chicken Kiev," or chicken breasts stuffed with cheese, vegetables, or other items. USDA said many of the people who became ill apparently did not follow the package's cooking instructions and microwaved the chicken dishes even though the instructions did not provide for it. Microwaving didn't heat the meals enough to kill the bacteria. The department said consumers should cook chicken products to a minimum internal temperature of 165 deg F. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued the warning on Friday 3 Oct after Minnesota health officials found a link between the chicken dinners with salmonella illnesses reported in Minnesota and 11 other states. It did not name the states in its release, and did not immediately respond to a message left at its press office seeking that information. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

INTERNATIONAL DISEASE REPORTS:

CHIKUNGUNYA (Indonesia): 8 Oct 2008. At least 10 residents Pangke Village, Kecamatan Meral, Karimun were attacked by chikungunya disease. "The illness began to spread, since a week ago, in the Meral Subdistrict. The data collected indicate that people in 2 villages have already been infected with the illness, 1st in the Pangke Village totaling 10 people and in the Sidorejo Village totaling 7 people," said the Head of the Meral Community Health Centre, Rusdi Hendra, in the Meral Community Health Centre, yesterday. Rusdi expected the families of those persons who are ill, to not panic because the virus that causes chikungunya will disappear by itself in several days. "The incubation period is approximately 2-4 days. The virus that causes the spread of disease is an alphavirus transmitted by mosquito bites of the *Aedes aegypti* species. He explained that the 17 residents who are suffering chikungunya are currently recuperating. Asked about the characteristics of the disease, he explained, the patient initially experienced high fever, followed by pain in muscles and joints, and lymph gland enlargement. Not infrequently, the symptoms of pain in the joints and muscles are very dominant and sufficient to cause temporary paralysis. In addition, he said although the disease is not so dangerous, health authorities still are taking steps in anticipation and are spraying and treating water catchments with abate in 2 of the villages. (Emerging Infectious Diseases are listed in Category C on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

HANTAVIRUS INFECTION (Viet Nam): 8 Oct 2008. A 25-year-old woman who lives in District 12 of Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), has a hantavirus infection, which is transmitted by inhaled dust exposed to rodent feces or urine, or transmitted by rodent bites, according to Phan Ngoc Nam, head of Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease at People's Hospital 115. The woman fell ill late last month (September 2008), but was not diagnosed correctly until a couple of days ago as the disease is very rare in Viet Nam, he said. Vu Thi Que Huong, head of HCMC Pasteur Institute's Department of Micro-organisms and Immunity, said on Monday 6 Oct that the woman presents a very typical case of the disease. But she said the virus had yet to be properly studied. The woman fell ill with a high fever on 20 Sep and was diagnosed with dengue fever by her doctor. As the fever had not subsided 3 days later, she was hospitalized and with viral fever. The patient then began having kidney problems, difficulty breathing, and blood showed in her urine, plus her stomach swelled and her lungs began to fill with fluid. She was moved to the cardiovascular department when her heartbeat slowed. She also had polyuria (excessive urination), fluid leakage in the outer cardiac membrane, and other lung problems. On Fri 3 Oct, the patient was diagnosed with hantavirus infection at HCMC Pasteur Institute. The patient said she had seen mouse feces in her home. The institute has given her family 8 mousetraps to catch mice in her house and some nearby houses. The institute previously diagnosed another patient with hantavirus infection, but the case was not as typical as this case, Huong said. Hantavirus disease has an incubation time of 9 to 35 days in humans before symptoms of infection occur, according to Nam. Nam said the symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headaches, dizziness, chills, stomach problems, and problems related to the heart and lungs. No specific medications for the disease are available now, although ribavirin, an anti-viral drug, is effective in the 1st stage of treatment, helping decrease the likelihood of death, Nam said. The most effective treatment, according to him, is intensive care, respiratory support, and the timely treatment of cardiovascular problems. Hantavirus infection has historically killed more than half those infected since its discovery in 1993. (Emerging Infectious Diseases are listed in Category C on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

BRUCELLOSIS, BOVINE (Uruguay): 7 Oct 2008. The Uruguayan government confirmed that the outbreak of brucellosis was mistaken for foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). The Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries of Uruguay confirmed today that the focus of infection detected in the northwest of the country, near the border with Brazil, is brucellosis and not foot-and-mouth disease as some official media reported. Minister of Livestock, Ernesto Agazzi, said it will open an investigation into the release issued Monday 6 Oct by the veterinary authorities of his ministry in which he warned that there could be an outbreak of FMD in the cattle population of Colonia de Palma. This was denied later, after the relevant health analyses were received. For his part, the director of Livestock Services, Francisco Muzio, said that dissemination of this statement was "irresponsible" and could have caused much harm to the export of Uruguayan beef. According to the Ministry of Livestock the outbreak of brucellosis in that locality of the Department of Artigas, located 40 kilometers from the border with Brazil had been reported days ago and measures were being taken to control it.

Currently, Uruguay is free from foot-and-mouth disease and statement of an outbreak of the disease would impact very negatively on the sales of beef abroad, one of the major items of export from this country. (Brucellosis is listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

E. COLI O157 (Canada): 5 Oct 2008. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is informing the public of its investigation into a possible food link between an E. coli O157:H7 outbreak in the USA, 2 possible cases in Southern Ontario, and chopped shredded iceberg lettuce from an exporter in Michigan. The Michigan Department of Community Health and the Illinois Department of Public Health issued separate public warnings concerning chopped shredded iceberg lettuce, which may be contaminated with E. coli O157:H7. Several illnesses with the same rare pattern of E. coli O157:H7 have been reported in both states, and the common link is believed to be bagged iceberg lettuce distributed to several institutions and restaurants by Detroit-based Aunt Mid's Produce Co. The distributor has voluntarily suspended distribution of all iceberg lettuce products. Immediately after being notified of the possible link in the USA, the CFIA initiated a food safety investigation. The CFIA is continuing to work closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (OMHLTC), local public health authorities, and USA officials on the investigation. CFIA has contacted all known importers and the trace back of products is nearing completion. This iceberg lettuce was imported into Ontario for use in restaurants and institutions. 2 illnesses with the same PFGE pattern of E. coli as the USA outbreak have been confirmed in Ontario. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

LISTERIOSIS, FATAL, MEAT PRODUCT (Canada): 2 Oct 2008. The number of deaths from a listeriosis outbreak that have been linked to contaminated meat products has reached 20, Canadian health officials said Wednesday 1 Oct. The latest death occurred in Ontario, where 15 of the deaths have been reported, the Public Health Agency of Canada said in a news release. 2 deaths occurred in the western province of British Columbia, with one each in Alberta, Quebec and New Brunswick. The health agency said 6 other deaths under investigation may also have resulted from the outbreak. The disease originated from the Toronto deli-meat processing branch of Maple Leaf Foods plant, Canada's biggest food company. The Listeria bacterium was found deep inside slicing equipment, according to company officials. The plant reopened 4 weeks after being closed on 20 Aug 2008. Several class-action suits are being planned as a result of the outbreak, which has led to one of the most serious food crises in recent Canadian history. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

OTHER RESOURCES AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

More information concerning Public Health and Emergency Preparedness can be found at the Office of Preparedness and Response website: <http://bioterrorism.dhmm.state.md.us/>

NOTE: This weekly review is a compilation of data from various surveillance systems, interpreted with a focus on a potential BT event. It is not meant to be inclusive of all epidemiology data available, nor is it meant to imply that every activity reported is a definitive BT event. International reports of outbreaks due to organisms on the CDC Critical Biological Agent list will also be reported. While not "secure", please handle this information in a professional manner. Please feel free to distribute within your organization, as you feel appropriate, to other professional staff involved in emergency preparedness and infection control.

For questions about the content of this review or if you have received this and do not wish to receive these weekly notices, please e-mail me. If you have information that is pertinent to this notification process, please send it to me to be included in the routine report.

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